

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for changing one or more physical layer communications parameters as configured in a physical layer device, the system comprising:
 - a first interface for receiving the parameters; and
 - a serial interface that
 - stores the parameters in advance of sending the parameters to the physical layer device, and
 - sends the parameters to the physical layer device at a predetermined time.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein said first interface is a peripheral component interconnect (PCI) interface.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein said serial interface is a serial peripheral interface (SPI).
4. The system of claim 1, further comprising:
 - a central processing unit (CPU) that sends the parameters to said first interface.
5. The system of claim 1, wherein said serial interface comprises:
 - a transmit first-in first-out (FIFO) queue in which the parameters are stored;
 - a serial interface port through which the parameters are sent to the physical layer device; and
 - one or more control registers for storing an indication of said predetermined time at which the parameters are to be sent from said transmit queue to the physical layer device.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein said control registers further store a channel identifier, which corresponds to a communications channel to which the parameters pertain.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the physical layer communications parameters correspond to a burst profile.

8. A method of changing one or more physical layer communications parameters in a physical layer device, comprising the steps of:

- (a) receiving the parameters;
- (b) storing the parameters in a serial interface;
- (c) receiving a point in time at which the parameters are to changeover;
- (d) storing the changeover point in the serial interface; and
- (e) at the changeover point, writing the parameters to the physical layer device.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the parameters correspond to a burst profile.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein said step (b) comprises the step of storing the parameters in a transmit first-in first-out (FIFO) queue in the serial interface.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein the changeover point is expressed in terms of a minislot count.

12. The method of claim 8, wherein said step (d) comprises storing an indication of the changeover point in one or more control registers of the serial interface.

13. The method of claim 8, wherein said step (e) comprises writing the parameters to the physical layer device via a serial interface port in the serial interface.

14. The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of:
(f) receiving periodic updates of the current time,
performed before step (e).

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the periodic updates are minislot counts.